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BROOKGREEN
WACCAMAW

IN THE CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY

SUSAN LOWNDES ALLSTON

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WACCAMAW

OF THE CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY

BY

SUSAN LOWMYER ALSTON



Alliston, Susan Lowndes
Brookgreen, Waccamaw in the
Carolina low County

Greensboro

1935

38

1964103

Rec'd Oct 18-1977

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This set of knives and forks was mounted on the horns of deer William Allston (1738-1781) shot on Waccamaw before the Revolutionary War and sent to England for the purpose. His initials may be seen on the silver butt of each.

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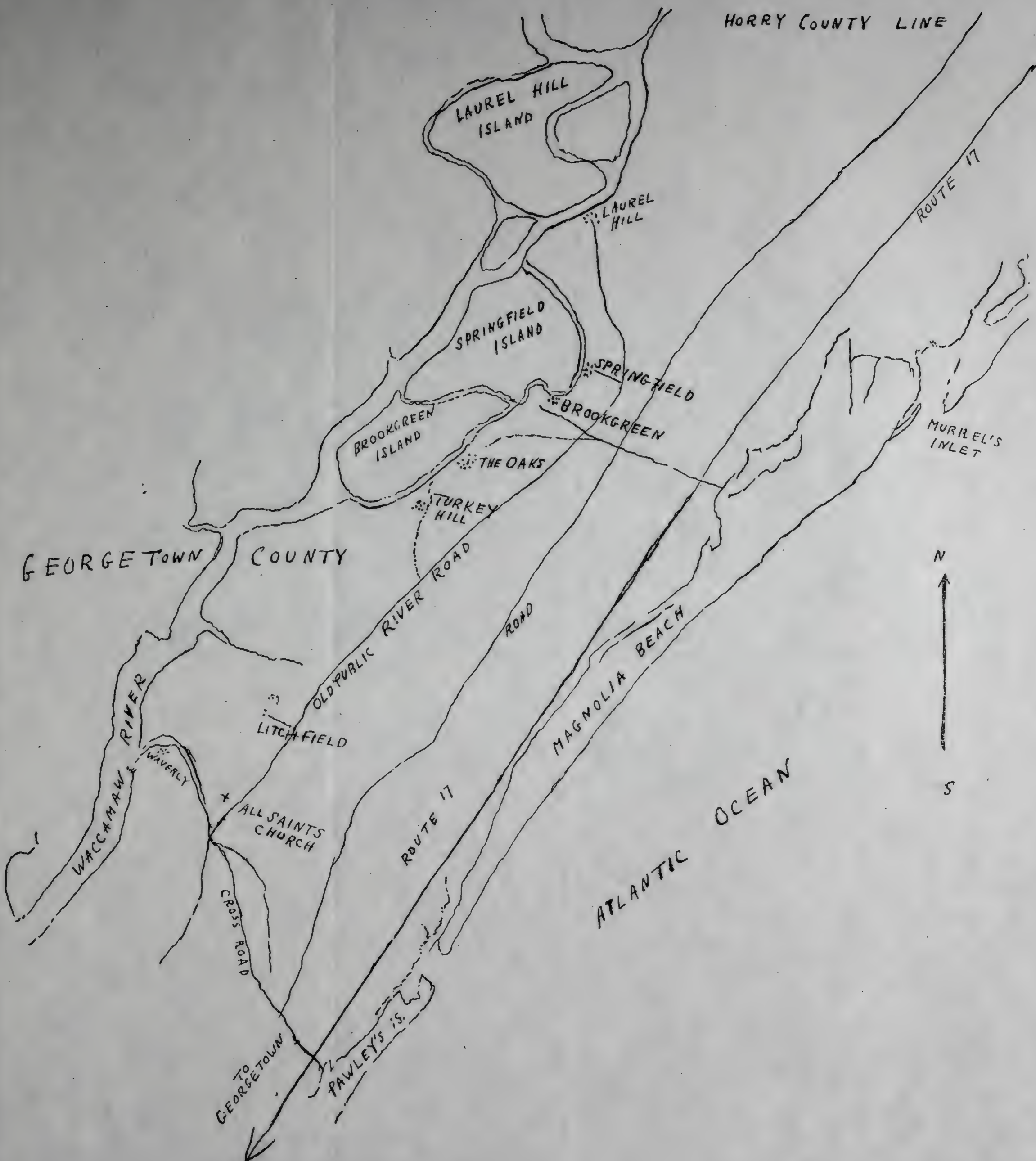
FOREWORD

As said in the foreword of an earlier edition of this little brochure, in painting this picture of former times the effort is to tell the truth. But to tell the whole truth is well nigh impossible because so much rich history has been lost in the ebbing tide of the last several generations.

But history is evolutionary. That fact is borne in upon the observant as new information crops up from time to time. The identity of Henrietta Johnson, to whom we are indebted for knowledge of some lovely types of our early colonial womanhood, remained a mystery until Anna Rutledge unearthed the fact that Henrietta was none the less than the wife of the rector of St. Philip's church. Newspaper files completely lacking for the year 1780-81 and 1781-82 were only last summer discovered and—praise Heaven—bought by the Charleston Library Society. There is no telling what they won't disclose! Now along comes Colonel Alston Deas and tells us that Brook Green was part of Hammersmith, the home from which John Alston sailed to South Carolina in 1682. This is the first and only light we have had on the origin of the name Brook Green, so we give you what there is—another thread in the fabric.

SUSAN LOWNDES ALLSTON.

“His native home deep imag'd in his soul.”



BROOKGREEN, WACCAMAW
IN THE CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY

By

SUSAN LOWNDES ALLSTON

In her *Chronicles of Chicora Wood*, Mrs. Pringle opens with mention of that John Allston of the ancient Suffolk family, (who spelled the name variously Alstan, Alstane,) who was born in England in 1666, and landed in Charleston, in 1682. He was the progenitor of the South Carolina Allstons and Alstons. He settled in St. John's, Berkeley, and his son, Peter, has many descendants there and thereabout today. John's other sons, John and William, from both of whom Mrs. Pringle was descended, moved up to Waccamaw river. Their sister, Mary, married December 31, 1719, Thomas George Pawley, (son of Percival Pawley, whose name is remembered in Pawley's Island) and went to her husband's home in the Waccamaw country, then in Craven County. It is probable that her descriptions of the delights of river and ocean on Waccamaw Neck caused her brothers to move there. Early in the era opened by "Good Governor Johnson," who gave more generous land grants than the Lords Proprietors had ever been willing to give, these two brothers established themselves on Waccamaw river.

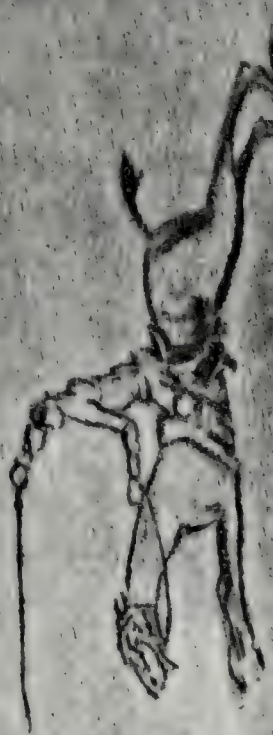
The above John Allston's arrival in South Carolina is recorded in the South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine for July, 1905, which says he was the son of Mr. William Alston, gentleman, of Hammersmith. Now Colonel Alston Deas after reading the Reminiscences of the engraver, John Sartain (D. Appleton and Co., N. Y., 1899), tells us that Brook Green was in Hammersmith, John Alston's early home. So it seems extremely probable that the Waccamaw plantation was named for the old home in England; as was done in so many cases in Carolina.

John Sartain, who later left England for America, writes, "Brook Green got its name from a small stream of water that flowed through the middle of it, crossed here and there by small bridges, guarded by a horizontal rail which was supported by a post at each end. One of these bridges with its protecting rail is shown in the engraving of 'The Tight Shoe' as seen through the open door. This I copied on the steel plate direct from nature." Mr. Sartain tells us that he sold this steel plate to Mr. Littell in Philadelphia in 1830. How interesting it would be if we could see it and what the original Brook Green looked like!

The *Book of Royal Grants*, Volume one, in the State House, Columbia, South Carolina, contains a bewildering array of grants to John and William Allston in Craven County, in the reign of George the Second, who signed himself "By the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland KING." He did "Give and Grant unto Mr. John Allston all that parcel and tract of land," then would follow a careful description, and "Reserving to US, and our Heirs . . . all white pine trees, 1/10 part of mines of silver and gold only and John Allston yielding and paying to us, our heirs and successors, or to our Receiver General . . . at the rate of 3 shillings sterling or 4 shillings proclamation money, for every hundred acres . . . provided they clear and cultivate at the rate of one acre for every 500 acres." In the 1730's each of these brothers got about a dozen grants in the Waccamaw country. Their sons and their sons' wives continued to get them later, and some of these grants are still preserved in the family.

The will of John Allston leaves "To my son John the Tract whereon I now live, which I purchased of Joseph Allen containing 490 acres . . . bounded on the north-west on lands of John Allston, son of William; to south-west in certain line of division markt between said tract and lands I purchased of William Bradford. Lands on the front which lies between same and west to the river and

Won by Trial, the Property of Wm. Ellison Esq.
at NEWMARKET, 1768



is part of 700 acres for which I have His Majesty's grant."

To each of his five children John left a goodly estate, and "My books to be divided among all my children." This will was proved May 1750. "Son John" had only daughters and died young. His widow, who was a sister of General Francis Marion, married Dr. Thomas Mitchell, and they lived in Georgetown.

Our story is concerned with the fourth son, William, who was a gallant colonial gentleman. Born in 1738, he is listed as "A patron of Agriculture and Justice of the Peace." William was also a patron of the turf. The South Carolina Gazette for February 9, 1769 says: "Last Tuesday the following horses started at Newmarket for the Charles Town Subscription Plate, carrying weight for age, and came in, viz: William Allston, Esqr.'s chestnut horse Tryal, got by Cade, 5 yrs. old, weight 9st. 4 lb." came in first. The paper continues, "The second heat afforded good sport . . . but Tryall's bottom brought him through victorious." A lovelier bowl than that won by Trial could not well be imagined. It is still owned by the family and there is still a William Allston to own it. The etching on the old white silver of a race horse in full action is entrancing.

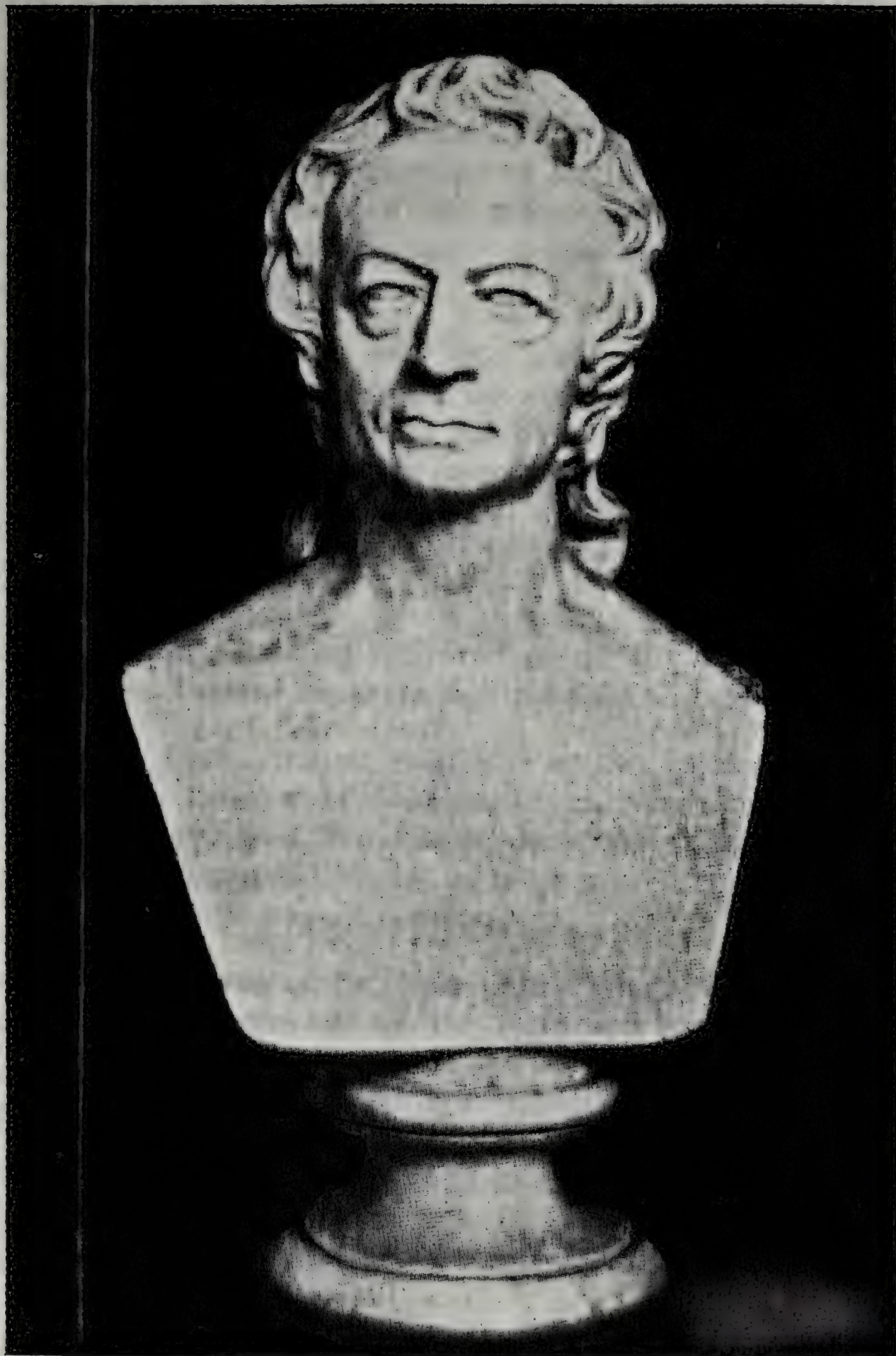
This bowl was made to order in London by Abram Portal as proved by the silver mark. It was sent to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington in a loan exhibit some years ago, and was there pronounced by Dr. Marcus Benjamin to be the finest piece of Paul Revere's work he had ever seen. Such a valuable opinion as that would lend color to the probability that, though there were a number of silversmiths in Charleston at that time, the bowl was sent on to Boston to be marked, and the beautiful etching was done there. If that was the case, it might account for the discrepancy in dates. The date of The Charleston Gazette reporting the race is February 9, 1769, and the date on the bowl is 1768. Such a mistake

could not have been made at home. The races were tremendous occasions in Charleston, everyone was interested, and this race in particular caused a furor.

There are a number of interesting things left by William. One is a set of steel knives and forks (they were two pronged at that time) which he had mounted in England on horns of deer from his own gun and lands in Waccamaw. The initials W A are on a silver plate on the butt of each. There are carvers, large knives and small ones, with the forks to match, in two handsome mahogany cases. The curve back of the tip of each knife shows plainly what in that century supplemented the two pronged fork, which could convey meat but not green peas! As the present of a four pronged fork was a novel thing to "Good Queen Bess," naturally it was some time before ordinary mortals used them.

Mills says "Captain William Allston served in Marion's brigade and was a firm patriot and a good soldier. He is the father of Washington Allston, the distinguished artist. *The Life of Marion* adds to this that "He may be enumerated among the martyrs to the cause of his country, for having been seized with a fever in camp, he had scarcely time to reach his home, where he expired at a middle age." Poor man! Who wouldn't die if, having a high fever he rode, on ever so good a horse, so many miles to reach his home!

William lies at the family burying ground at Turkey Hill, just a little south of Brookgreen, which was his home. There were then in All Saints' Parish, that having been taken off from the parish of Prince George's, Win-yah, in 1767. His will says, "My beloved wife Rachel . . . shall (if she chooses) live on either of my settled places during the time she remains my widow." These settled places adjoined one another and were left to his sons: the colonial domain "extending from river to sea" which William left his son Benjamin was evidently Brook Green, and was "clearly distinguished by No. 1 in a general platt hereunto annexed." To his son Washing-



WASHINGTON ALLSTON

Bust by CLEVINGER

ton, William left a plantation of 3 tracts distinguished by No. 2 and red lines and by having the natural feature of a spring. His will begins in the quaint, old fashioned way:

"I, William Allston, Gent., of All Saints Parish in Craven County, in the province of South Carolina, Planter, being of sound mind and memory, do hereby make this my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say:

"I recommend my soul into the hands of Almighty God that gave it, in hope of a glorious resurrection through the intercession of our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ. My body I desire may be decently interred at the discretion of my executors, and as to the worldly goods which has pleased God to bestow upon me, I dispose of in the manner following:

Imprimis, it is my will and desire that all my just debts and funeral expenses be first paid and discharged.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my two children, Eliza and Benj., the sum of 4300 pounds currency, that being the sum I received from the estate of their grandfather, Benjamin Simons, Esquire, to be equally divided among them and their respective heirs.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my beloved wife, Rachel, and her heirs and assigns forever, 3 negroes named Maryan, Beck and Abraham, and their increase; also all my household and kitchen furniture that may be in and belonging to my house in town (Char's Town); also my best horses that she may make choice of, and all my light carriages; and also she shall (if she chooses) live on either of my settled places during the time she remains my widow, and no longer.

Item. I also give unto my beloved wife, Rachel, the use of my house in Chars. during the time she remains my widow, and no longer.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Eliza, and her heirs and assigns, one negro wench, Minerva, and her child Cain, and her future increase. Then I give and bequeath unto my other 3 children, Benjamin, Mary and Washington, and to their heirs and assigns, a young negro to each of them, which shall be chosen either by themselves or my executors at any time before the division of my estate. Then I give and bequeath unto my son Benjamin and to his heirs and assigns forever, the plantation whereon I now live, extending from river to sea, containing 932 acres, and is clearly distinguished by No. 1 in a general plat hereunto annexed. Then I give and bequeath unto my son Washington, and to his heirs and assigns forever, a plantation consisting of 3 tracts of land, the one on the river called the Spring, containing 385 acres, and clearly distinguished by No. 2, and red lines, and also one other tract of land on the seaside, containing 384 acres, and is also distinguished in the general platt hereunto annexed by No. 2, and red lines, and also one other tract of land on the seaside, adjoining the last mentioned tract on the north, and is the same I purchased from Mr. Joseph Allston (formerly Montgomery's) containing 110 acres."

The rest of the will does not relate to Brookgreen.

In the fine hand in which William Allston recorded in his bible his marriage to Ann Simons, the birth of their children, her death and his marriage two years later to Rachel Moore, there is this entry: "My son Washington was born on Fryday Night—half after eleven O'clock the 5th of November 1779." This child developed a personality of such beauty and charm as to have established a tradition which ranks him with the high souls of this planet. Whether the next appraisal of his work will advance or retard it in the scale of the world's estimation remains to be seen.

Some have attributed Washington Allston's artistic temperament altogether to his mother, forgetting that

inheritance is Mendelian, though recent study of heridity shows talent must come from both parents to make a genius. The descendants of Mrs. Allston's second marriage (to Henry C. Flagg) have in several instances developed their artistic opportunity; but on the other hand, under adverse conditions, creative artistry has been shown by Joseph Blyth Allston, author of "*Stack Arms!*" and Elizabeth Waties Allston, (Mrs. J. J. Pringle) both descendants of William Allston, Jr. In his preface to *The Woman Rice Planter* Owen Wister describes the latter as having "A gift of style as natural as a wild bird's song."

In December, 1784, Captain Allston's widow married Dr. Henry Collins Flagg, who had come south as a surgeon in the army. From two reliable sources within the family we have it that the couple continued to live at Brookgreen until about 1800. Mary Allston married (en second noce) Wm. Algernon Alston, and her daughter, Mrs. Benjamin Burgh Smith, who lived at Rose Hill, said her grandmother and Dr. Flagg continued to live at Brookgreen and there entertained General Washington on his southern tour in 1791. After eleven years without the master the place must have been sadly run down. General Washington's journal notes:

"Thursday, 28 April—Mr. Vareen piloted us across the Swash . . . on the long beach of the ocean; and it being the proper time of tide we passed along it with ease and celerity to the place of quitting it, which is estimated 16 miles—5 miles farther we got dinner and fed our horses at a Mr. Pawley's a private house no public one being on the Road—and being met on the Road and kindly invited by a Dr. Flagg to his house, we lodged there, it being 10 miles from Pawley's and 33 from Vareen's. We left Dr. Flagg's at 6 and arrived at Captain William Allston's to breakfast. Captain Allston is a gentleman of large fortune, and esteemed one of the neatest rice planters in the State of South Carolina, and a proprietor of the most valuable ground for the culture of this article. His house, which is large and new and ele-

gantly furnished, stands on a sand hill, high for the country, with his rice fields below, the contrast of which with the lands back of it, and the sands and piney barrens through which we had passed, is scarcely to be considered." This was Clifton, owned by William, son of Joseph Allston, of The Oaks, who was an uncle of Mrs. Benjamin Allston, Jr. Both Williams were captains in Marion's men, and to avoid confusion, this William dropped an l from his name, and his descendants spell their name Alston. Wealthy in his own right, William of Clifton married twice, and both ladies were heiresses. His second wife inherited the Brewton house in King Street. The nick name for her husband soon became "King Billy," in contradistinction to the other William who was "Gentleman Billy." Judge H. A. M. Smith in his "Baronies of South Carolina," published in the April, 1913, *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, says William of Clifton dropped an l from his name in 1792. (Page (69)). However, there is a letter from General Marion written to this William during the revolution, and in this address the name is spelled Alston.

It is interesting to note that The Oaks (The Oaks closely adjoins Brookgreen, and is now a part of the Huntington deed), inherited from his father by Joseph Allston and willed to his grandson and namesake, was not named at that time, although Joseph is known in the family as Joseph of The Oaks. His will proved in July, 1784, says: "I do Give and Devise to my Grandson Joseph Allston (son of William Allston) when he arrives to ye age of Twenty four years old that plantation or Tract of Land Will'd to me by my Father with all ye Island of Swamp Lands over against ye same. Also one other Tract of Land joining ye same which I purchased of my brother John Allston makeing in the whole about One Thousand Three Hundred acres more or less. (This was the Oaks.) Allso one hundred Negroes takeing out of my number not yet particularized by the Discretion of my Executors and to be put on this said Land for the use and behoof of my Grandson Joseph when he ar-

rives to ye age of Twenty four years, but it is my Desire these Negroes may be placed there for that purpose within one year after my Decease and to be kept separate and Distinct from any other parcell or Number belonging to any other Estate and ye Issue, Increase Profits arising from ye whole for ye use and behoof of him my said Grandson and his Heirs and Assigns for Ever. And it is my will that my said Grandson Joseph Allston be supported and Liberally Educated out of ye Rents, Issues, and Profits thereof, and the Remainder applied to ye principal Annually, till he is of age."

This provision of his grandfather not only educated Joseph but made him independent enough to marry Theodosia Burr, with whom he was so desperately in love. They were married in 1801 and The Oaks was their home. For their one precious child, Aaron Burr Alston, Theodosia objected to the current methods of dosing for malarial fever. He died June 30, 1812, at the seashore place attached to the plantation and is buried at the family burying ground at The Oaks. To visit her father, who had only recently returned to this country and was most eager to see her, Theodosia left The Oaks December 30th, of the same year, and was escorted by William Algernon Alston, her husband's uncle, to a point in Winyah Bay where on December 31st she embarked on the schooner Patriot, in the care of her father's friend, Mr. Timothy Green. The Patriot had been fitted out as a privateer in the war with England and now carried her guns dismounted under deck. She also carried a load of Governor Alston's rice, and the golden grain (it had been pounded) was to be sold in New York and would finance Theodosia's trip. Mystery shrouds the fate of the Patriot and her distinguished passenger.

Benjamin Allston, generally called junior to distinguish him from a cousin, (Benj. Allston, Sr. was father of the lovely Martha Allston, who married John Pyatt) to whom Brookgreen was left by his father, William Allston, lost it by going security for a friend. Signing notes for friends was one of the curses of the day, so much so

that, in order not to show a lack of confidence in any friend in particular, one gentleman took a public oath that he would go security for none. Money was scarce then. Ramsey rather humorously wrote "Planters are the most independent and influential men in Carolina, especially when they are out of debt, and have money remaining from their last crop. When crops are anticipated . . . ruin is often the consequence, and much oftener since the revolution than before, for the indulgence formerly granted to subjects in Carolina has seldom been extended to citizen planters." It is not recorded who the friend was to whom Benjamin so unwisely extended help, but when his lawyer said "Mr. Allston, you were not of age when this note was signed, and so legally you cannot be held," he replied, "I was old enough to know what I was doing." So the place went, and Benjamin lived elsewhere.

An interesting liquor case, with lovely engraved decanters and goblets, a letter to his little daughter written from Newport in 1806, and the family tradition of his integrity are the only mementoes left of Benjamin. There was a miniature of him by Charles Fraser. It was left to his daughter, Mrs. Tucker, and to her daughter, Mrs. Weston, and was burnt up in the Hasty Point Plantation house, on Peedee river.

It is disappointing that neither in the bible record nor in his will does William Allston mention the name of his plantation home. His son Washington, and others, write in a general way of "Waccamaw." There are a number of instances of the same thing, amounting to an annoying anonimity in the early days, when a letter is merely headed by the name of the river the place was on: as Pedee, Santee, Waccamaw. There is an advertisement in a Georgetown paper from Benjamin Huger for someone to contract to bring and take his mail "from my plantation." How tantalizing! Had that advertisement been more explicit it might have been a help in determining several things of interest, among others the entertainment of Lafayette on his arrival on North Island. But

Mr. Huger was too well known to have to mention the name of his place.

The artist Washington Allston was born in the small colonial house, surrounded by big live oaks, on the site which was his father's home, which for many years past has been known as Brookgreen. In the *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* for April, 1913, Judge H. A. M. Smith so records it, spelling it as one word "Brookgreen."

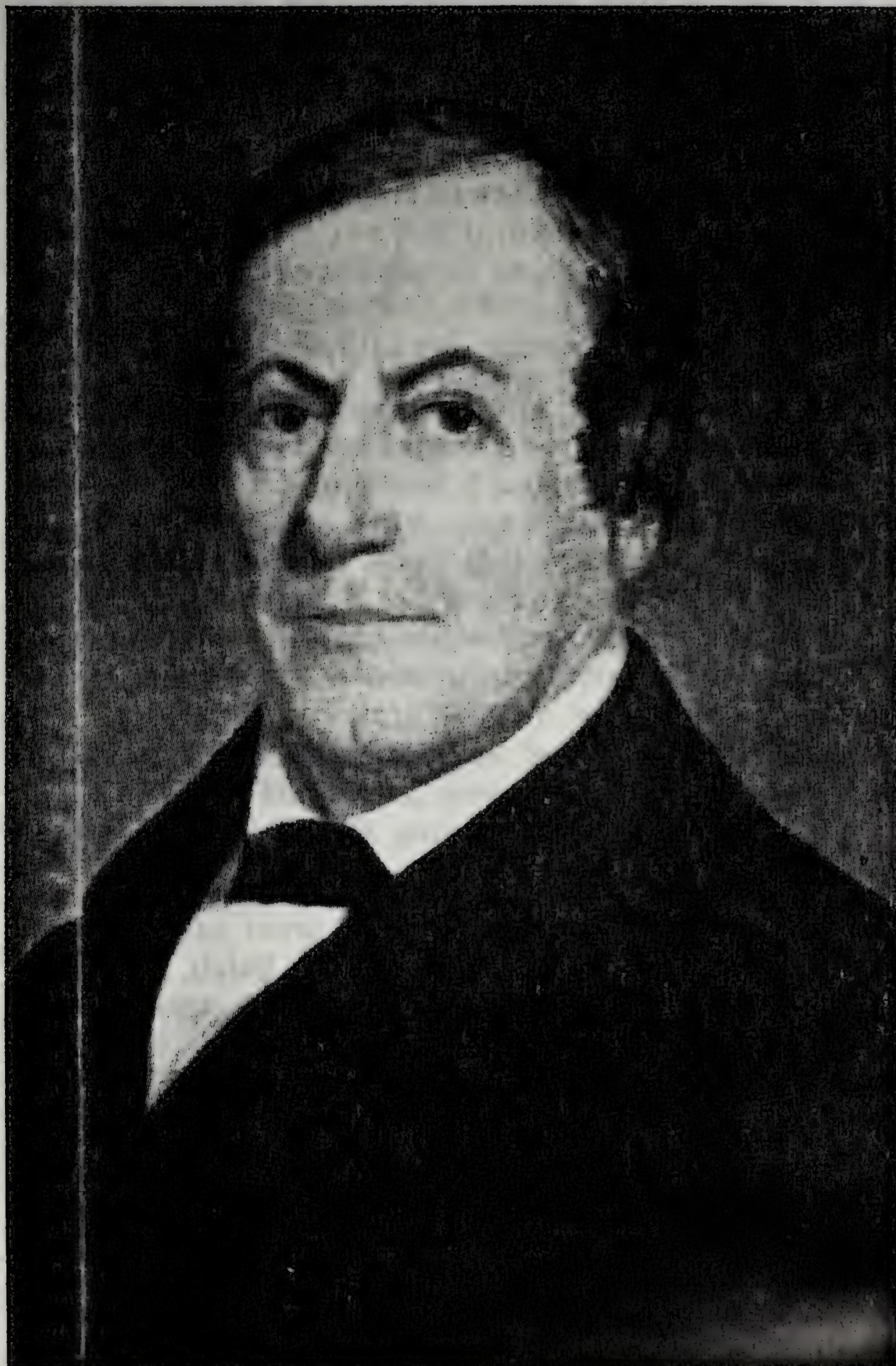
The Georgetown Gazette of April 30, 1800, has the following notice: "Married on Thursday, the 24 instant, at Springfield, Waccamaw, by the Rev. G. H. Spierin, Thomas Young, Esq., of Waccamaw to the amiable Miss Mary Allston." Mr. Young didn't live long for there is a letter from Mary's half brother Benjamin written in August, 1806, from New Port to his daughter Eliza in which he says—"Your Aunt Young has resumed her former name with only the deduction of an L." Her second husband was William Algernon Alston, son of William of Clifton.

There is special interest in Washington Allston writing, "One of my favorite haunts when a child in Carolina was a forest spring where I used to catch minnows, and I dare say with all the callousness of a fisherman; at this moment I can see the spring, and the pleasant conjuror Memory has brought again those little creatures before me; but how unlike to what they were! They seem to me like spirits of the woods, which a flash from their little diamond eyes light up afresh with all their gorgeous garniture of leaves and flowers." In a letter to his mother written from Newport, August 1, 1800, the artist says, "I have become so habituated to a country life (for Cambridge is but a rural village) that I shall think myself full happy enough in Waccamaw or St. Thomas." His mother had property from her father in St. Thomas' Parish, and there after 1800 she seems to have lived. J. B. Flagg tells us that after graduation at Harvard in 1800 Washington Allston returned to his

native state and his patrimony was turned over to him. He used it to pursue the study of art. In England he sought out Fuseli, who asked him if he was an artist. The answer was "I mean to be, if industry will make me one." Fuseli said "If I have any skill in physiognomy you have more than industry on your side." Allston replied, "I have a certain patrimony." "Ah," said Fuseli, "That makes a difference."

In an effort to move them out of the supposed route of Sherman's army the records of Georgetown County were unfortunately taken directly into the path of the enemy, and so lost. Where the usual documentary evidence is lacking, one must search through wide fields for gleanings wherewith to fill the picture. No record has so far been found of the transfer from the Allstons of their paternal acres in Brook Green and Springfield, but all indications point to their purchase by the Withers brothers, Francis and Robert.

The Withers family was a wealthy one long in the county. The tombstone of Mary Withers, who died in 1804, says she was the mother of Francis, Richard and Robert Withers. She gave up the pleasures of Society and retired to Long Bay . . . where she resided the great part of her Life, Devoted to the welfare of her children." Her son Francis was a man of great wealth, and resided for the most part at lovely Friendfield on the Sampit, and there he had built a chapel of unusual grace, with tall European looking steeple, for Negro worship and agreed to pay the preacher appointed there by the Methodist church. His will provides continuance of this payment "for ten years and for such longer time and so long as the owner of Friendfield plantation and Negroes may consent to have divine service by that denomination performed therein." His will also devised, "My two story dwelling house and lot of land in Georgetown, situated on the south side of Princess Street near the corner" as a residence for the said preacher. Other public benefits left by him were \$20,000 for a permanent fund to give assistance to old and disabled clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church,



JOSHUA JOHN WARD

Planter of the Big Grain Rice.

another fund to the Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of the P. C. Church in the State of South Carolina, a legacy to the Orphan House in Charleston and another to the Winyah Indigo Society in Georgetown. This fund built their hall which stands now on Prince Street, and houses what war and worms have left of a fine library. There were many legacies left to personal friends, of which we must not fail to mention: "I give and bequeath to Dr. Edward Heriot and Allard H. Belin equally to be divided between them all my wines and liquors at my "Farm" attached to the Springfield plantation."

Mrs. Robert Withers and Mrs. Benjamin Allston, Jr., were cousins and the families were intimate. The second son of Benjamin and Charlotte Ann Allston, born April, 1801, was named Robert Francis Withers Allston. He graduated from West Point in 1821, resigned his commission in the U. S. Engineers the next year, and returned home to help his mother hold on to her property, some of which was being disputed by a neighbor. He developed the estate left by his father on Peedee river into the profitable and lovely Chicora Wood of Mrs. Pringle's chronicles, served his state in many capacities, and became its governor in 1856.

The tombstone of Joshua John Ward states after 1852 that he was born at Brookgreen the autumn of 1800. His will, dated 22 December, 1848, mentions "Brookgreen, Springfield and all lands purchased of the Devisee of Mr. Withers." Going behind that to the Withers will, one finds some of this property, but it is hard to determine at this date just what lands they were. We must remember that land pertaining to rice culture was very valuable at that time, and sometimes divisions were much smaller than they are now. It is probable that the Withers rented their fields to Mr. Ward and then to his son, Colonel Ward, who was a man of great energy, and who bought the Withers lands back to the original estate when Francis Withers died in 1847. When Colonel Ward died five years later, Brookgreen was said to be worth half a million dollars.

"The devisee of Mr. Withers" was Mary Wilkinson Memminger, wife of the Confederate Secretary of the Treasury, C. G. Memminger. Her descendants say of Mrs. Memminger that her Withers uncles thought they must do well by Mary, because her nose was so large she could not be expected to get a husband. But judging by her spirited portrait and career, one can only conclude that her nose was not as great as her charm. Francis Withers' will says: "I give and devise my Springfield plantation, with the farm on the seashore, and all of my lands on Waccamaw . . . to Mrs. Mary Memminger (the legatee, who under the will of my brother Robert Withers will be entitled to his negroes after my decease)." This bequest was subject to the condition that Mrs. Mary Memminger should pay \$5,000 each to five other Withers nieces and nephews. She evidently solved the matter by selling out to Colonel Ward.

Famous as the planter of the golden, big grain rice from which he piled up a fortune, Joshua John Ward was affectionately called by the Chairman of the Committee on Rice of the State Agricultural Society, "The Planter of Brook Green." "*Sea Coast Crops*" in the discussion of manures from Straw and flour, had this note: "For the consistent experiment made with rice chaff and flour we are indebted to the late Joshua John Ward, whose observation, judgment and energy in managing his large estate were equalled by his humanity, hospitality and willingness to communicate. The eminence which he attained as a planter, the simplicity of his character, and the sterling qualities of his heart, which gained him many friends, procured for him, in 1851 the spontaneous offering of the honorary position of Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina,—on which he retired from public life."

Colonel Ward was one of the largest slave owners and rice planters in South Carolina. He married Johanna, sister of Dr. Andrew Hasell, a Scotsman. The following letter from him is the first record so far found of the

contemporaneous use of the name Brookgreen. He writes the name in two words, but "Brookgreen" is given by such an excellent authority as Judge Smith, and is used now.

Brook Green, Nov. 16, 1843.

Dear Allston,

The following brief remarks relative to the big grain Rice, I send you in compliance with your request.

In 1838, my overseer, Mr. James C. Thompson, a very judicious planter, residing on my Brook Green estate, accidentally discovered in the barnyard during the threshing season a part of an ear of Rice, from the peculiarity of which he was induced to preserve it, until he had an interview with me.

It was so very different from any other Rice I had attentively examined, in point of size, that I requested him to take care of, and plant it in the Spring on one of the ricefield margins, which had not been cultivated for several years. This, however, proved to be an unfavorable spot: for in long watering, the trash settled on and about the experiment rice—and after the "long water" the rats also injured it no little. These causes reduced the number of plants which matured to only six, the grain of which appeared the same as that which was planted.

Our want of success in procuring the quantity of grain expected, induced us in the Spring of 1839, to plant the Rice in a large tub filled with swamp mud, and placed in Mr. Thompson's garden, where it could be watered and attended to every day. But here another misfortune befell it. The careless servant who had it in charge, left the garden gate open, and a hog getting in destroyed the greater part of the rice. The remaining shoots were carefully taken up and transplanted in a pond; from which we obtained three pecks of rotten light rice—the fact of its being light was attributed to the want of water at the critical time of its maturing.

In the year of 1840, we planted with this seed not quite half an acre of new land, at Long Wood, which yielded in the Autumn forty-nine bushels and a half of clean winnowed rice.

In the year 1841, this product was sown in a twenty-one acre field at Brook Green, which yielded in the Autumn one thousand one hundred and seventy bushels of sheaf rice, clean winnowed. Of this quantity, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred bushels were milled, and sent to market. My Factors disposed of it at a considerable advance beyond the highest market price.

In the year 1842, I planted four hundred acres with this seed, and being so perfectly satisfied with both the product and the improved quality of the same, I was induced in the succeeding year (1843) to sow with it my entire crop. The first parcel, when milled, consisted of eighty barrels, netted fifty cents per cwt. over the prime new rice sold on the same day.

Such is a hurried account of the origin of the *big grain Rice*, which I have been solicited to furnish. I earnestly trust that this improvement of the seed will be of incalculable benefit to the entire Rice-growing region.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua John Ward.

To Col. R. F. W. Allston.

This letter is taken from the *Proceedings of The State Agricultural Society*, held in Columbia, South Carolina, November 27th, 1843, when Colonel R. F. W. Allston, Chairman of the Committee on Rice, presented and read his report, of which the above letter was part. The "Proceedings" were published in the *Southern Agriculturist, Horticulturist, and Register of Rural Affairs* for the year 1844 (Page 30).

A collapse of property values followed the War Between the States. Brookgreen was sold for division among

Colonel Ward's heirs, but a daughter, Mrs. Arthur B. Flagg, kept as her share a part of the plantation called "The Farm." The Arthur B. Flaggs, their house and children, were swept off Magnolia Island (part of the Brookgreen property, formerly called Allston's Island) in the storm of 1893. Two sons survived, one who was away, and Dr. Ward Flagg, who saved himself and a little daughter of Mr. Bentley Weston. Dr. Flagg continues to live on his mother's part of Brookgreen, and there for years the post office has been kept by him.

On the walls of Dr. Flagg's house may be seen some of the finest specimens of the work of the artist George Flagg. There are some portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua John Ward, of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur B. Flagg, and one of Alice Flagg, pronounced by a critic to be the pearl of all Flagg portraits, so like a white camellia is this lovely painting of a young girl.

Colonel Ward either added to or built over the simple colonial house at Brook Green, and his granddaughter, Mrs. William White, gives this description of it: from the front door one entered a hall with staircase leading to bed rooms on second floor. On one side of the hall was the drawing room, opposite it, the dining room, directly off of which was the pantry, the kitchen being outside of course, as was the custom of the time; and there one may see it now. The downstairs rooms had high frescoed ceilings. The design in the dining room was of various vari-colored fruit, looking so real as to seem fastened to the wall. The drawing room had a Cupid scene. Dr. Hasell had his bedroom downstairs. To the rear of the house was a large room where they danced and which they called the ball room. Outside the house was painted white and had green shutters. There was a two-story porch in front, shaded by a camellia tree on one side and a crepe myrtle on the other.

In 1869 Louis C. Hasell, M. D., leased Brookgreen from the estate of Joshua John Ward, and the following year he bought it for \$10,000. It was on one of those

trips to the North which were too much in the system of the southern gentleman to be at once relinquished, that Dr. Hasell married his second wife, Miss Clemence Willett of New York. The strength of the rice market for a number of years after the Confederate war was a boon to the rice country of coastal Carolina, which did not altogether lose the industry until the cheaply made upland crops of Louisiana and Texas made the expensive system of irrigation unprofitable. There was still much coastal traffic then, and Dr. Hasell brought his bride from New York to Georgetown by water. Mrs. Hasell was a devoted churchwoman. For years she made it possible for All Saints Church to be kept open by contributing \$500 yearly to the rector's salary. Some time in the eighties, Mrs. Hasell's brother, Mr. Marinus Willett, brought Mrs. Willett and their two little daughters from New York, and joined his sister in her southern domicile, buying the rice land of Springfield and building a cottage in the Brookgreen garden.

Mr. Willett had a man's outdoor interests. He planted and besides had a love of machinery and a dream of inventing such a suction pump as would dry the rice fields, spring tides or high winds to the contrary notwithstanding. But what a change for Mrs. Willett, who had been brought up to the pleasures of New York and Newport society! She was a beautiful woman, a daughter of the Reverend Dr. Morgan of St. Thomas' church, New York. No one ever heard a murmur from her, and her manner of playing to the best in everyone aroused general admiration. In 1885 Mrs. Willett established a mission for the colored people of the plantation. The plantation chapel services, ministered to by the rector of the parish, were supplemented with teachings; there was a free dispensary of medicines, where Dr. Arthur B. Flagg gave kind services; Mrs. Willett had sewing classes for the women and also fitted up a little hospital, where Dr. Ward Flagg attended the suffering at a very small cost per head.

The Willett's eldest daughter, Edith, married Mr. Ralph Smith a fine type of Irish gentleman, and together they continued the Church work among the Negroes. This lovely woman fell a victim to the deadly anopheles mosquito. Mr. Smith joined the Church Army in Europe and was recognized by the Georgetown soldier to whom he happened to minister there in 1918.

About an acre and a half of the land around it had been given to the plantation chapel by Dr. Flagg's mother. To this Mr. Willett added something and saw that the deed was recorded. This little property at the head of the Brookgreen avenue was bought by Mr. Huntington for the liberal price of \$6,000, which has been a boon to St. Faith's mission a few miles away, the last stronghold of the Episcopal Church for the Negroes on Waccamaw.

At the time the Reverend Alexander Glennie was rector of All Saints' Parish, 1832 to 1862, his work among the Negroes extended thirty miles up the river and he reported that not less than twelve plantation chapels had been erected and were in use, and "Some of these are superior to the ordinary country churches."

In 1920 Brookgreen was bought from Mrs. Willett and the children of Mrs. Gantt (who heired their interest from their step-grandmother, Mrs. L. C. Hasell) by Dr. J. A. Mood of Sumter, who was sponsor for the Waccamaw Club, composed of a number of Carolinians who wanted the hunting and the rest and recreation to be had there.

Though in the decade between 1920 and 1930 Brookgreen changed hands six times as against four owners in the previous two centuries, yet history was made while the old place was in the hands of the venerable Dr. Mood. Dr. Mood's daughter is Julia Peterkin, and three of her books may be said to have been born at Brookgreen: *Green Thursday*, 1924; *Black April*, 1927; and *Scarlet Sister Mary*, 1928.

Mrs. Peterkin is a strong writer, using the realism in vogue today. More enthusiastically received at the North than at the South, one writer in the Book Review Digest says *Black April* is "in a secondary way . . . one of the most sheer and absolute pieces of race fiction ever written." That the terms of the Pulitzer award should have been changed from "The best picture of manners and morals of American life," in order to give it to Mrs. Peterkin for *Scarlet Sister Mary* is comment enough. Going along in our old fashioned conservatism, the idealistic side of us trying to bring out the best and turn our eyes away from the rest, thinking it bad form to mention aught but what is pleasant, we may be shocked at this crass realism. We may think the crude incidents rather massed against the poor Darkie, as color is massed in an impressionistic painting. But it is life—life which grips and challenges.

And what concerns us especially in connection with all this and Brookgreen is that in Julia Peterkin's writing Nature is everywhere present and that, despite the author's upbringing several counties further up-state (which fact crops up from time to time to the observant eye) this omnipresent Nature is regional—it belongs to Waccamaw. Blue Brook is Brookgreen. "The earth's richness and the sun's warmth make life an easy thing. Life fills and enfolds everything here. The tide was going out. The river wind smelled of the mud flats, steaming and baking in the fire poured down by the sun. The water had gone out and left them naked. The poor things were fastened down so that they could not move. Like herself. Fastened down tight."

That is fine descriptive writing and it is a picture true, deeply true of much of our country. It is true of white and black. But with the future beckoning more brightly, this is also true: "A deep hush lay at the foot of the pines, and high overhead an early morning breeze moved." I feel the morning breeze moves and will move.

In 1924 the Waccamaw club was succeeded by the Brookgreen club, and through their trustee was sold in 1926 to W. S. Griffen, of Greenville. His interests were taken up by the F. M. Credit Corporation and sold in January 1930 to Archer Milton Huntington, well-known patron of art. Mr. Huntington has established and endowed "Brookgreen Gardens" as a great "Natural museum of native flora and fauna and objects of art of South Carolina" . . . "for their preservation and to promote learning in regard thereto."

The Huntington deed includes the plantations of Brookgreen, Springfield, The Oaks, and Laurel Hill, making a total of approximately 6,635 acres. The Brookgreen Gardens, incorporated in 1932, and in 1935 given an endowment of a million dollars, consist of about forty-four acres surrounding the site of the colonial house of William Allston. The house, with "ball room" wing added by J. J. Ward, burned while in the possession of Mrs. Hasell. Her insurance provided that it should be replaced. This was done in a shoddy way. Indeed, it is impossible that old timbers, and what goes to the making of an old house, could be replaced. The replacement Mr. Huntington had pulled down.

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The brook, green or blue, according to the eye of the beholder, the beautiful live oaks, the box and formal setting of the old garden are there. The plan for the future is evolving. To describe the exquisite statuary constantly being placed there, the museum and gardens so interestingly combined, and the generous design of the donor shall be the work of another pen.

Formerly so inaccessible, this wonderful spot may now be reached by crossing on route 17 from Georgetown the two and a half mile bridge which was built with Federal aid, and which spans three rivers flowing into Winyah Bay—the Black and the Peedee, which have converged a few miles higher up, and the Waccamaw. The bridge lands on the lower part of the much loved

Waccamaw Neck. From there a lovely half hour's drive brings one to Brookgreen.

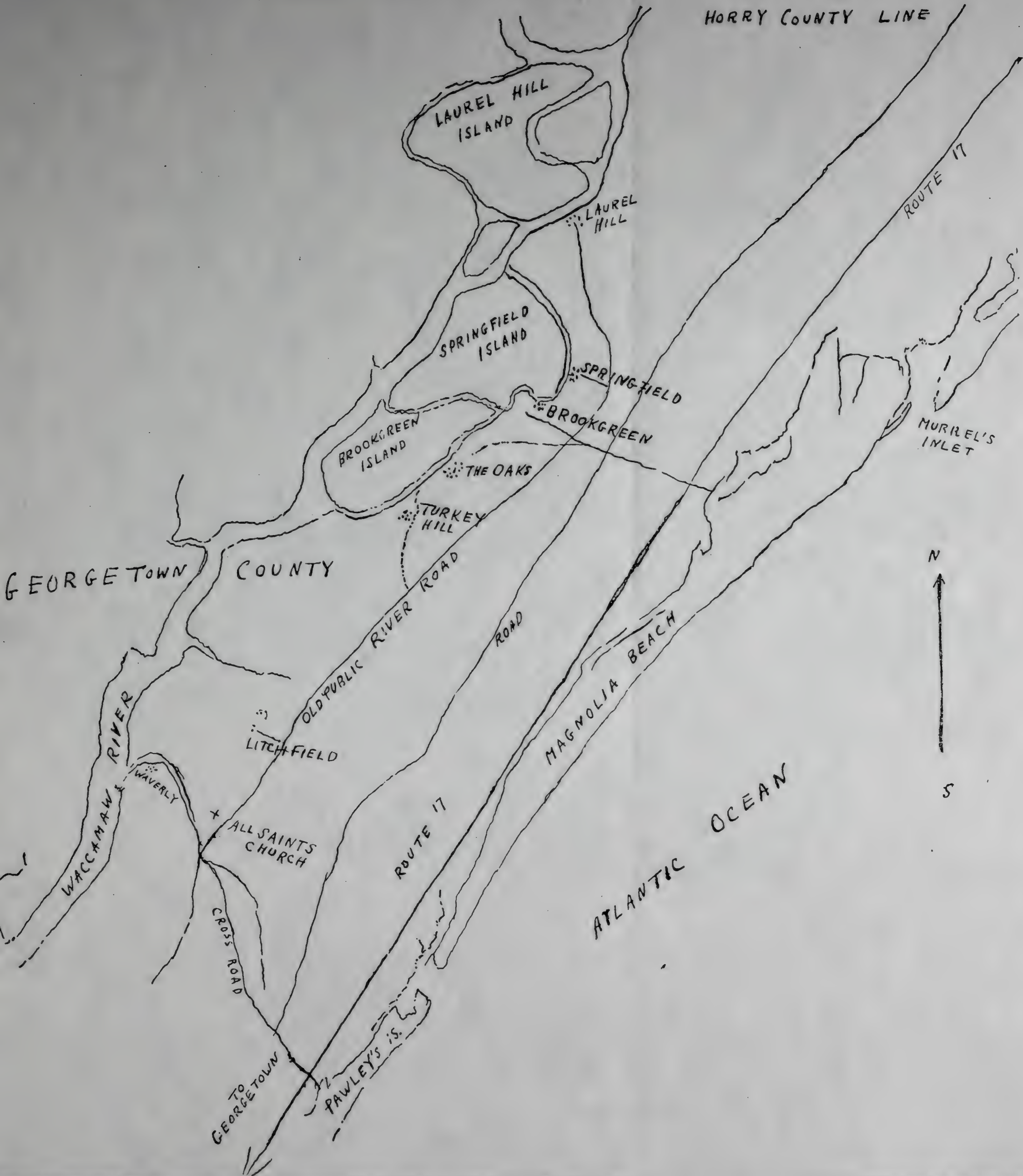
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N. C., Jan. 1, 1862.



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ELIZABETH=THOMAS LYNCH

ESTHER=A. JOHNSTON

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THOMAS LYNCH
(Signer Declaration of Independence)

ELIZABETH=ROBERT WITHERS

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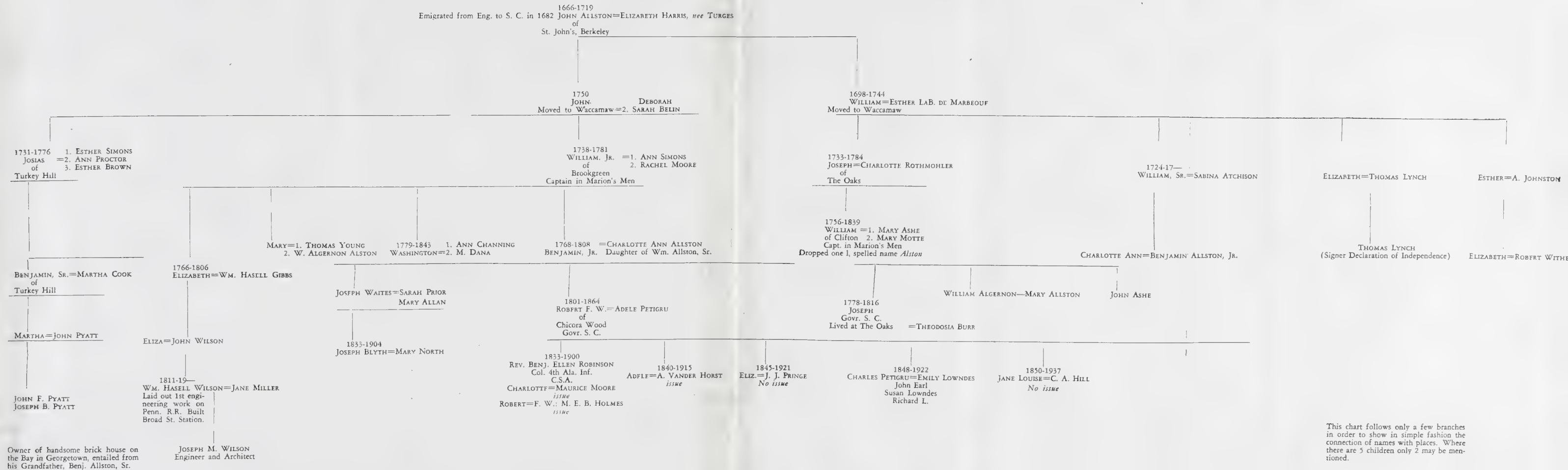
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This chart follows only a few branches in order to show in simple fashion the connection of names with places. Where there are 5 children only 2 may be mentioned.



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